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Introduction

1. Early in May 1952, following the appointment of Willi Stoph, previously Leiter of the B.f.W., to the post of Minister of the Interior, Berndt Weinberger, hitherto Leiter of the DDR OFFICE of Reparations, took over the control of the B.f.W.; and those as his deputy Heinz Raeschler, the Leiter of the HA.II. - Walter Allenstein, former deputy to Stoph, and Kramer fnu, Leiter Abteilung I, Kasse, in the HA.I. were transferred to the Ministry of the Interior to join Stoph. Within the space of a few weeks increased activity was apparent in all departments.
2. The most outstanding aspects of the work of the B.f.W. during May and June were as follows:
 - (a) There was a lull in the preparations which in April 1952, had appeared to foreshadow the setting up of sections to deal with defence research. Instead, a reorganization of the HA.III ensued, which merely drew a distinction between those departments dealing with the supply of technical equipment to the para-military forces, and those concerned with routine supplies of a non-technical order.
 - (b) Renewed emphasis was placed on those aspects of work in the B.f.W. concerned purely with supplies. By cabinet decree, orders of the B.f.W. were given a priority equal to those for reparations; both for urgency of completion, and for allocation of materials. Furthermore a new department was created in the HA.I. concerned specifically with the procurement of material through the Ministry for Material Procurement.
 - (c) The HA.III. (air) began to expedite its preparations for the expansion of the aircraft industry, and for training of the FDJ in gliding.

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- (d) Vigorous efforts were made in all departments to ensure that the rough planning of supplies to the para-military forces in 1953 was completed early in 1952. First planning figures for 1953 were relatively modest and objective.
- (e) The B.f.W. began to plan supplies to the Grenzpolizei for the first time.
- (f) Preparations were made by the B.f.W. (also for the first time) to produce fire engines and fire equipment suitable for ammunition dumps.
- (g) Direct liaison was carried out between representatives of the FDJ and B.f.W. about the supply of military-type motor cycles for the former.

Structural changes in the B.f.W.

3. In May 1952 Bernhardt Koppatsch, formerly Leiter of Abteilung II of the HA.I. was promoted to Hauptabteilungsleiter to replace Allenstein, who went to join Willi Stoph in the Ministry of the Interior. At the same time a new department headed by Ernst Hickel was created under him in the HA.I. responsible for liaison with the Ministry for Material Procurement, and for the procurement of all material required by departments in the B.f.W. in order to complete orders placed with DDR plants on behalf of para-military customers.
4. Possibly as a result of the appointment of Raeschler as deputy Leiter of the B.f.W. (and a consequent need for a redistribution of responsibility), but also in accordance with the general trend towards increased specialization, the HA.III. of the B.f.W. was completely regrouped in May and June 1952. Whereas previously it had consisted of six sub-departments all under central control, these departments were now divided into two distinct groups as follows:
 - (a) Abteilung II(a)
 - (b) Abteilung II(b)
5. Into Abteilung II(a) were grouped all the Unterabteilungen which were concerned with technical and operational supplies, as opposed to routine supplies of domestic equipment. The Leiter of the new Abteilung II(a) was Hess fmu, who personally confirmed the positions of heads of sub-departments. The grouping of the Unterabteilungen in this Abteilung was as follows:
 - (a) Abteilung 1(a): Planning, under Wenzel fmu. This Abteilung remained otherwise unchanged, except that the previous Leiter Jahn fmu, was no longer in office (new whereabouts not known).
 - (b) Abteilung 3(a): Vehisler, under Robert Hoffmann. This sub-department remained otherwise unchanged.
 - (c) Abteilung 4(a): Communication and Electronics. This department, also remained unchanged, under Friedrich Letrecht.
 - (d) Abteilung 6(a): General Machine Construction. (also unchanged except that Martin Klunker, formerly only a member of the Abteilung VI, now became a Leiter. This department was engaged especially on charging equipment (Ladestationen) in June 1952.
 - (e) Abteilung 7(a): A new Abteilung under Vesper fmu, hitherto Leiter of Abteilung VI. This department was concerned with machine equipment, but the distinction between its function and that of Abteilung 6(a) was not clearly defined. It appeared that the department would be mainly concerned with the supply of optical equipment and delicate mechanical equipment.

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6. The Abteilung II(b), Leiter Ploeschke fnu,¹ was charged to control all the remaining departments of the HA.II as follows:
- (a) Abteilung 1(b): Planning, under Frau Lotte Kapielski.
 - (b) Abteilung 2(b): Clothing, under Ploeschke and Henschel fnu.
 - (c) Abteilung 5(b): Provisions, under Foerster fnu.
7. The HA.III (Air) at the B.f.W., previously regarded as a more or less "slumbering" department, became extremely active during May-June 1952. In a conference which took place between representatives of the SSC and the heads of the B.f.W. in the first week of June 1952, the possibility was mentioned that the Waggonfabrik in Dessau would be taken over by Miller, Leiter of the Hauptabteilung III, for aircraft production. Miller himself was in favor of the proposal as he knew that there would be a good supply of constructors and trained personnel in the area and considered that the sheds there were suitable for the aircraft industry.
8. In the course of June 1952, Miller's department was very active in sending representatives (chief among whom was Koersten, fnu) into a number of plants in the DDR in order to assess production capacities, and also to discover any specialists in aircraft production located with them. Miller's envoys carried identity documents showing them to be from the Ministry for Machine Construction and not from the B.f.W. The traffic into Miller's office in June 1952 was also greatly increased.
9. A number of leading representatives in the FDJ made repeated visits to the HA.III where negotiations were carried out about the construction of gliders for the FDJ. As a result of the negotiations, an order was placed with the Autohilfe plant in Meissen to produce 20 towing winches (Winde) for gliders and a number of 80 h.p. engines were also ordered for towing purposes.
10. In the more general work of the B.f.W. in May-June 1952, planning for 1953 began to plan an important role. The new heads of the B.f.W. made it clear that they intended to take advantage of the availability to the B.f.W. of the former SAG's, to achieve generous planning for 1953 early in 1952. They announced that the HVA, HVS, HVGV and HVL had received new orders to produce their rough plans (Grobplaene) for 1953 by 10th June 1952. At the end of June 1952 first glimpses of some of the rough estimates for production in 1953 in the planning department of HA.II showed that they were surprisingly modest. For the vehicle department, for example, planned figures for the entire customers (Bedarfsstraeger) for 1953 were as follows:
- (a) Horch H.3-A. 4,300 vehicles
 - (b) Trucks G.5 568 vehicles
 - (c) H.6 64 vehicles
 - (d) Phaenomen 850 vehicles
 - (e) H.1 and P.1 300-400 vehicles
 - (f) Amphibious vehicles 679
 - (g) Motor cycles and sidecars 100
 - (h) Full-track vehicles 44

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11. A few days previously Raeschler has been seriously contemplating an output of 20,000 H.3.A's for the B.f.W.'s customers in 1953, and it was obvious that something had happened to cut the impetuosity of his planning department. It appears possible that he was influenced by a report from the Abteilung 3(a), Vehicles, which pointed out that by the end of 1952 the HVA would have roughly 10,000 trucks at its disposal and if production were carried on at the same rate, over 30,000 vehicles would be held by the end of 1953. In theory, to man these vehicles with driver and mate, and to provide a supervising staff of 10%-15%, 70,000 men would be required, i.e. 50% of the effective manpower of the HVA. Moreover, 20 kilometers of garage space, 8 Kilometers deep would be needed, complete with fuelling stations.
12. Another interesting development which occurred in June 1952, was the assumption by the B.f.W. of responsibility for supplies to the Grenzpolizei formerly a commitment of the HVdVP. Special liaison representatives Maseberg, fnu, and an assistant (name unknown) were appointed by the HVdVP to arrange supplies to the border police in conjunction with the B.f.W. In principle the HVdVP retained control of Grenzpolizei supplies but in fact its quartermaster's office (Hauptintendantur) was thus transferred to the B.f.W.
13. Some excitement was also caused in the B.f.W. in June 1952 by the discovery that no arrangement existed for the regular supply of fire engines and fire equipment for the para-military forces. Chef Inspekteur Heinrich Heitsch of the HVA who visited the B.f.W. was gravely concerned about fire equipment for an institution which he said was being built in Wolfsburg, near Gransee, to hold supplies of heavy ammunition.
14. Through the B.f.W., it became apparent during May-June 1952 that the FDJ was becoming increasingly important as a reservoir of military manpower for the HVA. A number of senior representatives of the FDJ visited the B.f.W. during this period to make arrangements not only for the gliding equipment but also for 10 Field Kitchens for FDJ camps and for supplies of cross-country motorcycles. The question of the FDJ's becoming a customer (Bedarfsstrecker) of the B.f.W. was not raised, but the organization's views on types of motorcycles to be produced were carefully taken into consideration, and advice given by B.f.W. representatives on the acquisition by the FDJ from industry of motorcycles not required by the HVA.
15. In spite of difficulties and shortages, ambitious plans were evolved at the B.f.W. in May-June 1952 for the expansion of DDR industry. A conference was held in early June 1952. Raeschler, Hess, fnu, and Hoffmann of the B.f.W. and Lang fnu and Selig fnu, of the HV Fahrzeugbau were present. It was decided that the 6720-strong EMW factory (former BMW) should take over production of heavy motorcycles, with an anticipated output of roughly 5,000 motorcycles annually. The plant was also envisaged as the center of production of a 2/3 liter vehicle as a successor to the BMW-240 which was to be adapted as a P.1 and also converted into an amphibious vehicle.
16. Further decisions were taken about the Simson plant in Suhl which was also provisionally earmarked for motorcycle production and the 5,000 strong Waggonbau Werke in Ammendorf which originally were intended to work in conjunction with the IFA plant and do all coach building for the DDR. This latter plan, however, was finally rejected by the SCC.
17. The main shortages affecting vehicle production in May-June 1952 were lead for accumulators, brass for radiators, cast steel (Stahlguss), pipes for the production of motorcycle engines and cog wheels for gear boxes for gear boxes. As a consequence of shortages of cast steel the Horch Werke delivered only limited numbers of H.3.A. IKW's and G.5 production which should have been in full swing in July 1952 failed to come up to expectations. According to reports from Werdau, only ten G.5 vehicles were finished in June 1952 because of lack of cast steel and cog wheels. Up to the 30th June 1952 only 650 trucks had been produced by the Horch Werke towards its target figure of 1,200. Actual delivery figures of various vehicles up to 30 June 1952 were as follows:

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- (a) Phaenomen (ambulances) 60 vehicles
- (b) H.3.A. trucks 650 vehicles
- (c) F.9 passenger cars
(primarily intended for HVDVP) 90 vehicles
- (d) Field Kitchens 100 vehicles

18. Almost the entire output of plants engaged on vehicle production was delivered to the B.f.W. during May and June 1952 any other consumers having to apply for special authority from the latter. Even the M.S.S. which required 25 trucks for evacuation purposes had to order through the B.f.W, and was only promised delivery at the end of July 1952. The only exception to the general ruling was the so-called Office for Government Contracts which carried on with the formation of a state reserve of vehicles, which it was revealed would be placed at the disposal of the police in any emergency. The state reserve aimed to procure 500 H.6 vehicles by the end of 1952, but as the engines for this vehicle were the same as those used in the G.5 urgently required for the HVA, it appeared doubtful whether they would prove successful.

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Comment: This name should probably read Plischke.

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